

Application No.: 10/698275
Docket No.: AD6859USCIP

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AMENDED CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A process for the production of cyclic ester oligomers, comprising carrying out in a continuous manner the steps of:

(iii) contacting linear ester oligomers, having a degree of polymerization of about 1 to about 20, dissolved in a solvent with an enzyme to generate a solution enriched in cyclic ester oligomers, and

(iv) separating the cyclic ester oligomers from the solution.

2. (original) The process of Claim 1 wherein a recirculating reactor is used to produce the cyclic ester oligomers.

3. (original) The process of Claim 1 wherein a linear reactor is used to produce the cyclic ester oligomers.

4. (original) The process of Claim 1 wherein the linear ester oligomers are derived from diols of the formula $\text{HO}((\text{CH}_2)_p\text{O})_r\text{H}$, where p is 2-10 and r is 1-5, and dimethyl terephthalate.

5. (original) The process of Claim 1 wherein the linear ester oligomers are derived from diols of the formula $\text{HO}((\text{CH}_2)_p\text{O})_r\text{H}$, where p is 2-15 and r is 1-10, and dimethyl terephthalate.

6. (canceled)

7. (original) The process of Claim 1 wherein the enzyme is at least one lipase, protease, and/or esterase.

8. (original) The process of Claim 1 wherein the cyclic ester oligomers are separated from the solution by precipitation.

9. (original) The process of Claim 1 wherein the cyclic ester oligomers are separated from the solution by extraction.

10. (original) The process of Claim 1 where the cyclic ester oligomers are separated from the solution by evaporation.

11. (original) The process of Claim 1 where the cyclic ester oligomers are separated from the solution by crystallization.